

CLAIMS:

Sub A² 7 1. A method of combining voice frame network endpoint probe results, the method comprising:

transmitting plural endpoint probes to produce plural endpoint probe results
5 indicating the preparedness of the endpoints for calls routed thereto;
identifying similarly situated endpoints;
representing each of the similarly situated endpoints by a reduced number of
recorded endpoint probe results that substantially represent the preparedness of each of
the similarly situated endpoints.

10 2. The method of claim 1 which further comprises:
caching the reduced number of stored endpoint probe results for each group of
similarly situated endpoints.

15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said representing includes mapping plural
individual network addresses into the network address of a group of plural individual
network addresses that represent the similarly situated endpoints and by recording the
endpoint probe result for the network address of the group as representative of the
preparedness of the similarly situated endpoints.

20 4. The method of claim 1 which further comprises:
proxy-reporting the reduced number of recorded endpoint probe results as
representative of one or more of the similarly situated endpoints.

25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an
Internet protocol (IP) phone.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an
Internet protocol (IP) voice gateway.

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7. Apparatus for consolidating plural endpoint probe results into a reduced number of representative endpoint probe results, the apparatus comprising:

5 a mapping mechanism for mapping the probe results for similarly situated endpoints into a reduced number of endpoint probe results that substantially represent the preparedness of each of the similarly situated endpoints, the mapping mechanism including executable software instructions for identifying similarly situated endpoints within a voice frame network by their individual network addresses and executable software instructions for mapping the network addresses of the identified ones of the similarly situated endpoints into a network address that is representative of the similarly
10 situated endpoints, and

a recording mechanism for recording the reduced number of endpoint probe results.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 which further comprises:

15 a proxy reporting mechanism for reporting the reduced-and-recorded endpoint probe results as representative of one or more of the similarly situated endpoints that is mapped by said mapping mechanism into such reduced-and-recorded endpoint probe results.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 which further comprises:

20 a caching mechanism for caching the reduced-and-recorded probe results for the similarly situated endpoint groups.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 which further comprises:

25 a pinging mechanism for producing the plural endpoint probe results, said pinging mechanism test-probing plural endpoints to determine the preparedness thereof for calls routed thereto.

30 11. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein at least one of the plural endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) phone.

12. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein at least one of the plural endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) voice gateway.

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13. A voice frame network address consolidation method for use with pinging endpoints to determine their interconnectivity preparedness, the method comprising:

identifying similarly situated endpoints within the voice frame network by their individual network addresses;

5 mapping the network addresses of the identified ones of the similarly situated endpoints into a network address that is representative of the similarly situated endpoints; and

utilizing the pinging results for the mapped-to network address to represent the interconnectivity preparedness of the similarly situated endpoints that are mapped thereto.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) phone.

15 15. The method of claim 13, wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) voice gateway.

16. A computer-readable medium containing a program for consolidating voice frame network address endpoint probe results to determine their interconnectivity preparedness, the program comprising:

instructions for identifying similarly situated endpoints within the voice frame network by their individual network addresses;

instructions for mapping the network addresses of the identified ones of the similarly situated endpoints into a network address that is representative of the similarly situated endpoints; and

instructions for utilizing the pinging results for the mapped-to network address to represent the interconnectivity preparedness of the similarly situated endpoints that are mapped thereto.

17. The computer-readable medium in accordance with claim 16, wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) phone.

18. The computer-readable medium in accordance with claim 16, wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) voice gateway.

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19. Apparatus for consolidating plural endpoint probe results into a reduced number of representative endpoint probe results, the apparatus comprising:

5 means for identifying similarly situated endpoints within the voice frame network by their individual network addresses;

means for mapping the network addresses of the identified ones of the similarly situated endpoints into a network address that is representative of the similarly situated endpoints; and

10 means for utilizing the pinging results for the mapped-to network address to represent the interconnectivity preparedness of the similarly situated endpoints that are mapped thereto.

20. The apparatus of claim 19 wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) phone.

15 21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein at least one of the endpoints includes an Internet protocol (IP) voice gateway.